



S-E-C-R-E-T

1 June 1967

NOTE TO: Sherman Kent

FROM:

SUBJECT: US Wounded in Vietnam

1. The increasing publicity being given to US losses in Vietnam gives somewhat a wrong impression as far as wounded are concerned. The US practice is to apply very liberal standards as to what constitutes a wound. The following paragraph provides a more meaningful perspective for viewing such figures.*

2. Of the US wounded, 33 percent are out-patients and return to duty in one or two days. Of the remaining 66 2/3 percent, some 37.8 percent (25 percent of total) return to duty. Thus in all, about 58 percent of US wounded return to battle, while 42 percent are permanent losses (only about 1 percent of the US wounded actually die).

3. For comparison, VC wounded is computed via the following formula devised by MACV and more or less accepted by the rest of the intelligence community. For every 1 VC KIA there is 1.5 WIA, thus 100 KIA equals 150 WIA. Of the WIA, 10 percent die during evacuation; of those remaining 2 percent die in the hospital. Of the remainder, 13 percent are permanently disabled. Thus for every 100 VC KIA, there is assumed to be 35 additional permanent losses from wounds.

* The data in paragraph 2 are provided by the Office of the Surgeon General of the Department of Army and reflect a base period of October 1965 to November 1966.

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GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and de-
classification

~~SECRET~~

*Memo to DCI
file*

1 June 67



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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

1. The Board session on this Memorandum was attended throughout by Jim Critchfield, [redacted] of Jim Angleton's shop, and [redacted] of OCI.

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2. The Board is in agreement on all of the major judgments.

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SHERMAN KENT
Chairman
Board of National Estimates

Attachment

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Approved For Release 2005/07/13 : CIA-RDP79R00967A001200010055-8

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